

Seed of Light goes to 'Macca'

MENTION the name Paul McIntosh to anyone in the northern grains industry and it's almost guaranteed to invoke a smile, a humorous quip or an anecdote about his seemingly-boundless agronomic knowledge.

Paul, or Macca as he's better known to many, is one of the region's most recognised and respected agronomists and has been a luminary in broadening the understanding, adoption and community recognition of best practice farming throughout his 40-year career.

His tireless dedication to the industry was acknowledged when he was awarded the coveted Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC) northern region 2020 Seed of Light Award at the GRDC Grains Research Update in Goondiwindi.

Initiated in 1999, the GRDC's *Seed of Light* Award is presented annually to an individual who has made a significant contribution to communicating the importance and relevance of research outcomes to the wider grains industry.

GRDC Northern Region Panel chair John Minogue said Paul was an outstanding leader with an innate ability to distil complex scientific concepts into information that has practical relevance to the industry and broader community.

Paul currently holds two industry roles – northern region agronomist for Pulse Australia and northern extension agronomist for the Australian Herbicide Resistance Initiative (AHRI) and a regular Rural Weekly newspaper columnist.

Paul said he was honoured to receive the *Seed of Light* Award and proud to serve an industry that had given him so many friends, opportunities and experiences over the years including witness to enormous advances in farming technologies.

"I often say that technology has given us our paddocks back and those advancements are continuing – technology and innovation are things our industry has always embraced to overcome challenges and take advantage of opportunities. It'll be exciting to see what the next 40 years bring."



Paul McIntosh, John Kerlin and Hugh Reardon-Smith.

drumMUSTER collects 35m containers

ON Friday, March 6, 2020, in the town of Renmark, South Australia, Agsafe's drumMUSTER program's 35 millionth agvet chemical container was collected. The milestone container was delivered to the Renmark Refuse Depot which holds a regular collection of agvet containers each month.

The Renmark Paringa region is one of Australia's major horticulture regions with fruit growing, farming and tree nurseries the main industries. There are an estimated 3000 growers in the region, accounting for approximately 30 per cent of the local population.

The council has been a part of Agsafe's stewardship program since 2000 and has collected and recycled over 163,000 drums in this period. This is testament to the local farmers, viticulturalists and growers' commitment to the environment, as well as the local council's vision for providing a responsible pathway for empty containers.

"With our vast horticultural area, the importance of recycling chemical drums is essential. Recent times have seen growers, large and small, see the value of the program and utilising it to their full potential. Our rejection rates are very minimal each month, with on average 900 drums recycled each month or 10,000 annually over 11 months," said Steve Atkinson, Renmark Paringa District Council Waste Transfer Station Operator.

drumMUSTER's National Program Manager Allan McGann said of the milestone, "The program continues to provide a responsible disposal and recycling option for all agvet chemical users. The improvement in returns at the Renmark Paringa District Council region demonstrates the increased need for farmers and other users to meet their Quality Assurance & BMP (Best Management Practice) program requirements."

It's not only councils that hold collections for the drumMUSTER program. Various community groups around Australia participate in the program by conducting their own collections which help raise much needed funds for their local communities.

The drumMUSTER program has been operating since 1999 and has recycled over 40,000 tonnes of agricultural plastic waste which otherwise would have been put into landfill, buried or burned on farms.

Agsafe's General Manager Dominique Doyle said of the milestone, "drumMUSTER is an industry led stewardship program where the manufacturers of the chemicals (not the containers) voluntarily sign up to the levy program; making this a free recycling service for eligible products. What an outstanding result to reach 35 million containers! Congratulations to Renmark Paringa Council."

